

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 COME-00 FEAE-00 ACDA-05 AGR-05 INT-05 IO-10

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7269

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EALR MO UR

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN/USSR PETROLEUM AGREEMENT

1. LOCAL PRESS ANNOUNCED DEC.19 THAT
ON NOVEMBER 28, GOM AND USSR GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES
SIGNED AGREEMENT FOR USSR TO DELIVER 650,000 MT OF PETROLEUM
IN 1976. LAST PUBLISHED DATA WERE FOR 1974 WHEN GOM BOUGHT
460,650 MT FROM SOVIET UNION.

2. ACCORDING OUR BEST ESTIMATE, USSR WILL BE PROVIDING
ROUGHLY A THIRD OF MGROCCO'S OIL NEEDS NEXT YEAR, UP FROM
ABOUT 20 PER CENT IN 1974, BUT ABOUT SAME PROPORTION AS 1975.

3. MAIN ITEM OF EXCHANGE UNDER CLEARING AGREEMENT (ONE OF
ONLY HALF DOZEN GOM STILL HAS IN FORCE) IS MOROCCAN ORANGES.
SOVIETS HAVE AGREED TO TAKE 200,000 MT CITRUS IN 1976. THIS
VOLUME REPRESENTS 36 PER CENT OF 1974 CITRUS EXPORTS AND
PROBABLY OVER 40 PER CENT OF LOWER 1975 CROP. NEXT YEAR
PROMISES BETTER CROP, SO MOROCCO MAY BE TRADING ONE THIRD OF
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CITRUS CROP (SECOND LARGEST EXPORT--CONSIDERABLY BEHIND

PHOSPHATES) IN RETURN FOR THIRD OF OIL NEEDS.

4. COMMENT: AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, GOM HAS SHIFTED PETROLEUM SOURCING FROM ALGERIA TO USSR WITH REMAINING TWO THIRDS COMING FROM IRAQ, KUWAIT, AND SAUDI ARABIA, WITH SMALLER QUANTITIES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. USSR NOW BY FAR MOROCCO'S BIGGEST MARKET FOR ORANGES, WHICH MOREOVER, ARE OF HARDER TO SELL LOWER QUALITIES. WE JUDGE FROM SIGNATURE OF THIS MAJOR TRADE AGREEMENT GOM, AT LEAST, HAS DECIDED NOT TO LET CONTRETEMPS OVER SAHARA QUESTION GET IN WAY OF EXPANDING COMMERCIAL RELATIONS, THOUGH SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF ALGERIA CONTRIBUTES SOME UNCERTAINTY. FACT THAT PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGREEMENT HELD UP UNTIL DECEMBER 19 OF POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.
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